

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3, and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,526,117 to Willenbacher ("Willenbacher").

Claims 2 and 5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowed by the Examiner if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to overcome the objection to claim 2, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 2 as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 2 has been cancelled accordingly.

To better define the invention, claim 5 has been amended to recite at least one of the variables listed therein.

Having amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 2, the Applicant believes that claim 1 is now patentable over Willenbacher. In addition, the Applicant believes that claims 3-5 being dependent on claim 1 are now also patentable over Willenbacher.

In view of the Examiner's comments with respect to claim 5, new independent claim 6 and new dependent claim 7 have been added. New claim 6 includes the limitations of claims 1 and 3-5, as suggested by the Examiner. New dependent claim 7 is comparable to original claim 2.

As new claim 6 includes the relevant limitations of original claims 1 and 3-5, the Applicant believes that new claim 6 is patentable over Willenbacher. In addition, the Applicant believes that new claim 7 being dependent on claim 6 is also patentable over Willenbacher.

New claims 8-13 and 14-19 for systems and computer program products, respectively, have been added. These claims are directed toward embodiments that implement the methods of claims 1 and 3-7 and are supported by FIG. 2 and by page 5, lines 17-30, of the specification. The Applicant believes that new claims 8-19 are also patentable.

No new matter has been entered by these amendments.

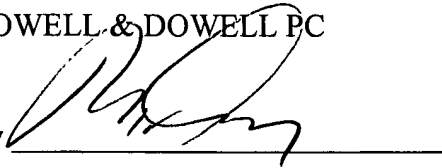
Please note that claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice in order to expedite prosecution of this application. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue this cancelled claim in a continuing application or otherwise.

The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

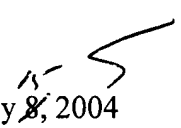
Respectfully submitted,

DOWELL & DOWELL PC

By



Ralph A. Dowell
Registration No. 26,868
Telephone: (703) 415-2555
Fax: (703) 415-2559

Date: July 8, 2004 
DOWELL & DOWELL PC
Suite 309
1215 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202

JC/jc